

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A system for analyzing test devices, comprising:
a computer for executing digital imaging software;
a scanner, coupled to the computer, for generating digital images; and
a template for holding at least one test device, wherein the template is configured to fit on a scanning surface of said scanner and includes at least one window configured for receiving said at least one test device so as to maintain the at least one test device in a fixed location during scanning of the at least one test device by said scanner.
2. The system of claim 1 wherein said at least one window defines at least one target area for scanning when said template is positioned on said scanner for scanning.
3. The system of claim 1 wherein said scanner is a standard off-the-shelf digital scanner.
4. The system of claim 1 wherein said test device is an immunoassay test device for detecting the presence of one or more target substances in a human fluid and indicating the presence of said one or more target substances by providing a visually observable indicator.
5. The system of claim 1 wherein said scanner generates a digital image of said at least one test device and said computer generates a report containing desired information based on an analysis of the digital image of the at least one test device by said digital imaging software.
6. A template for use in a test device analysis system, comprising:
a sheet of rigid material, wherein said sheet is configured to lay flat on a scanning surface of a digital scanner;
a plurality of windows cut into said sheet, wherein the size and shape of said windows are configured to receive and hold a corresponding test device in a fixed position during scanning of the test device by the digital scanner.
7. The template of claim 6 wherein said plurality of windows further define target areas for analysis when said template is positioned on said scanning surface.
8. A method of analyzing test devices comprising:
placing a template on a scanning surface of a scanner, wherein the template includes at least one window configured to receive and hold a test device therein;

scanning said template using said scanner so as to generate a digital image of said template;

defining at least one target area for scanning based on the location of said at least one window in said template when the template is positioned on the scanning surface;

placing at least one test device into said at least one window;

scanning the at least one test device while it is positioned in said at least one window so as to create a digital image of said at least one test device; and

analyzing the digital image of said at least one test device so as to determine the presence or absence of at least one visual indicator on said at least one test device.

9. The method of claim 8 further comprising generating a report based on whether said at least one visual indicator is determined to be present or absent.

10. A system for analyzing test devices, comprising:

means for executing digital imaging software;

means for scanning test devices and generating digital images; and

means for holding at least one test device so as to maintain the at least one test device in a fixed location during scanning of the at least one test device by said means for scanning.

11. The system of claim 10 further comprising means for defining at least one target area for scanning said at least one test device when it is positioned within said means for holding.

12. The system of claim 10 wherein said means for scanning comprises a standard off-the-shelf digital scanner.

13. The system of claim 10 wherein said test device is an immunoassay test device for detecting the presence of one or more target substances in a human fluid and indicating the presence of said one or more target substances by providing a visually observable indicator.

14. The system of claim 10 wherein said means for scanning generates a digital image of said at least one test device and said means for executing digital imaging software generates a report containing desired information based on an analysis of the digital image of the at least one test device by said digital imaging software.

15. A computer-readable medium containing instructions executable by a computer that when executed perform a method of analyzing test devices, the method comprising:

scanning a template placed on a scanning surface of a scanner so as to generate a digital image of the template, wherein the template includes at least one window configured

to receive and hold a test device therein;

defining at least one target area for scanning based on the location of said at least one window in said template when the template is positioned on the scanning surface;

after at least one test device is placed into said at least one window, scanning the at least one test device while it is positioned in said at least one window so as to create a digital image of said at least one test device;

analyzing the digital image of said at least one test device so as to determine the presence or absence of at least one visual indicator on said at least one test device; and

generating a report based on whether said at least one visual characteristic is present or absent.

16. A device for collecting and dispensing fluid, comprising:

a syringe tube having a tapered end and a fluid dispensing hole at the tip of the tapered end, the syringe tube further including a larger hole at an end opposite to the tapered end; and

a syringe plunger configured to be received by said larger hole of the syringe tube, wherein the syringe plunger includes an absorber member attached at one end of the plunger for absorbing said fluid from a predetermined source such that when the syringe plunger is inserted into the syringe tube via the larger hole, the absorber member is compressed by at least a portion of the internal wall of the syringe tube, thereby expelling at least some of the fluid from the absorber member and dispensing the fluid through said dispensing hole.